

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES
December 15, 2009

The meeting was called to order by 1st Vice-Chair Ronald Fulton at 1:45 pm. Introductions were done. Agenda and minutes for September 2009 were unable to be accepted because there was no quorum during the beginning of the meeting but later quorum was reached but voting of agenda and minutes was not brought back up.

Attendance: R. Fulton, J. Granda, A. Rigerman, D. Valkema, M. Schmidt, and J. Martinez who was late.

Chairperson's Report: Since Damian Gregory was not there was no Chairperson's report.

Nominating Committee: Marie Schmidt reported the recommendations of the committee. They felt that their first choice was to have Damian Gregory stay on as Chairperson and all the officers stay in their present positions. If Mr. Gregory is unable to stay then they recommend: Ronald Fulton for Chairperson, Jose Martinez for 1st Vice Chair, Jackson David for 2nd Vice Chair, and Denise Valkema for Secretary. Ilene Hyams said that there will be an opportunity to nominate from the floor in the January meeting. She also said that if CODI decides to elect Damian Gregory for another term then he would continue on until the paperwork was finished by the Commissioner, even if it takes longer then the February date at which Mr. Gregory would make 8 years on CODI. She strongly reminded CODI members that the sunshine laws as always apply. If there is any coercion from one CODI board member to another either for votes or nominations, then the election will become invalid.

Transportation Committee: Denise Valkema will follow up with Harry Rackard in January. He will ride the bus with her to see some of the problems that people are having in the fixed route system. There will be a January transportation committee meeting time to be announced. There have been significant changes to the fixed route system, the changes started on 12/13/09. On December 16, 2009 at 2:00pm there will be a meeting on the RFP for para-transit. There have been some changes of personnel at Transit; the new acting chief of para-transit is Rubin Legra.

Housing Committee: Ronald Fulton reported that CASHA and Affordable Housing committee will merg.

New Business: Director, Lester Sola from Elections came to CODI to help explain the vote by the Commissioners to recommend to the State expanding the time from 2012 to 2016 for an accessible machine that would give a paper receipt. CODI and other citizens have expressed concern over this. Mr. Sola said that there wasn't any significant improvement in systems from 2007 till 2009 however, he does see some movement for better technology coming out soon and he rejected the idea that money was the driving reason new machines were not bought to comply with 2012. Discussion followed. Two issues were brought up: the need to make accommodations to poll-workers who are disabled and the need for more voter education. A video shown to poll-workers was discussed; Mr. Sola said it was from the Secretary of State's office. He would make it available to CODI for comments. The Director said that they have spent 3 million dollars to make every voting place accessible even though many are in Churches.

A question was asked about the timing of traffic lights. It was said that there are many factors that go into deciding the length of lights. There is a department in Public Works which handles traffic lights. It was suggested that if a person thought they would like to extend the time of a light they contact Public Works. A concern was brought up about scaffolding and signs that are hazardous to people who are blind. It was suggested that Miami Beach Public Works be contacted. If rights of ways are inaccessible because of construction, public works departments within the municipalities need to be contacted. Ilene Hyams will get some information as to what the County can demand from the municipalities.

Maude Gonzalez did a PowerPoint presentation on bus stops and shelters. Ms. Gonzalez said that they cite the stops but it is responsibility of the municipality to put in the shelter. However Miami-Dade Transit does process and help to resolve any complaints. Ms. Gonzalez took down the information of problem areas from CODI members and said that she would look into the matter and bring it to the attention of the various municipalities.

Old Business: Ilene Hyams read the letter concerning the Commissioners' vote to the State on the election matter. This letter will be sent to every Commissioner.

Open Discussion: Alan Rigerman asked for a person to come from the library. Ilene Hyams asked Mr. Rigerman to supply her with the issues so she would know who to invite from the Library system. Denise Valkema commented on her frustration on board members that are not coming to meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:05pm.